



Ride. Walk. **Live.**

# ANNUAL REPORT 2017

# NVTA

NAPA VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

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# Letter from the Chairman



Climate change is altering not just how and where we travel, but also the very fabric of our lives in Napa Valley.

The 2017 storms caused flooding, mudslides and toppled trees. It was the third-wettest winter in Napa County history. After a 5-year drought, record rains forced road closures, detours and delays that caused a staggering \$52 million in damages to roads, bridges and other infrastructure.

Flooding also forced partial closure of Highway 37 for more than three weeks in January and February, compelling motorists to take detours and delaying trips on what already is a notoriously congested highway. Other local highways were also closed because of winter storms, including segments of SR-121, SR-29, SR-128, and SR-12.

Devastating firestorms in October also opened our eyes to how climate change is affecting our sensitive valley. The fires forced thousands of evacuations, killed seven people and damaged or destroyed more than 1,000 structures. The county suffered \$6 million in losses due in part to fire-damaged tree removal and guardrail replacement along rural roads and associated losses in tax revenues. Highway repairs in the Bay Area following the fires were \$14.4 million.

Climate change is bringing about more severe droughts and rising sea levels. The effects of climate change are likely to result in more severe storms, coastal erosion, increased temperatures and more frequent, longer heat waves contributing to more severe wildfire seasons.

A number of resiliency efforts are underway in the Bay Area to address climate change impacts to infrastructure and ecosystems. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Resilient by Design program brings together local, national, and international design experts with community members and local leaders to develop innovative solutions to address the effects of sea level rise, severe storms, flooding, and earthquakes in communities around the San Francisco Bay. One of the teams will focus on a project in San Pablo Bay, a key location in the North Bay.

NVTA is working with the other three North Bay Congestion Management Agencies, as well as with Caltrans and MTC, on near, medium and long-term solutions to flooding and congestion on Highway 37. The plan will also consider the impacts of the project on the sensitive ecosystems along the corridor. As part of this effort, all four counties have held public outreach meetings and the SR 37 Policy Committee Meetings are open to the public.

Working together, we can meet the challenges brought about by climate change and minimize its impacts on our transportation infrastructure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter G. White".

**Peter G. White**, Chair

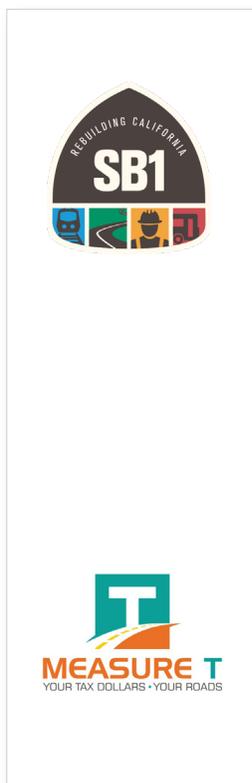
# From the Executive Director



2017 was a challenging year for Napa. The firestorms and flooding played havoc on the region’s roads but relief in the way of a new statewide funding package and the long awaited Measure T road maintenance program are here to help.

## ***Finally, a State Funding Package For Transportation – SB 1 Working for Napa***

Senate Bill 1 (Beall), the Road Rehabilitation and Accountability Act of 2017 was approved by the state Legislature and signed into law by Governor Brown on April 28, 2017. SB 1 is the largest infrastructure funding package in a generation and will provide \$52 billion in new funding over 10 years to address highways, local roads, and transit system needs.



The program will deliver \$5 million annually to Napa County’s local jurisdictions for road rehabilitation. SB1 will also generate nearly \$400,000 annually in the Local Partnership Program formula funds to match transportation projects in Napa County and over \$500,000 annually for Vine Transit improvements. Another \$600 million will be made available statewide annually through competitive grants for highway, roads, bike and pedestrian improvements. In addition, Caltrans will receive nearly \$2 billion each year for maintenance and safety improvements along the state highway system. Look for the logo on signs posted for SB-1 funded projects in your neighborhood.

## ***The Long Wait Is Over – Measure T is here!***

In 2012, the voters of Napa approved the Napa Countywide Road Maintenance Act. Measure T, as it is commonly known, continues the Measure A ½ cent sales tax which was initially passed by voters for flood mitigation projects. That program will end on June 30, 2018 and beginning July 1, 2018, those sales tax dollars will be distributed to your County, City, and Town jurisdictions for road improvements. The program is administered by NVTa.

Measure T will generate nearly \$16 million a year. Funding agreements with the jurisdictions are being finalized and project lists are being developed. The first meeting of your citizen-led Independent Tax Oversight Committee is being scheduled. Go to the [www.nvta.ca.gov/measure-t](http://www.nvta.ca.gov/measure-t) website to find dates and times of upcoming meetings. NVTa will publish information about projects funded by Measure T in future annual reports and in local newspapers.

The staff and Board at NVTa value your feedback and invite you to contact us with questions and suggestions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kate Miller'.

**Kate Miller**, Executive Director



# Vine First Responders

NVTA will never forget the 2017 firestorm. The fires that began on Sunday night, the 8th of October 2017 will be remembered as one of the Valley's most devastating events.

Napa County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff contacted NVTA staff at 12:20 a.m. on Monday morning requesting emergency evacuation buses at Silverado Country Club where the Atlas Fire was raging out of control. By 1:30 a.m., Vine drivers, dispatchers, and managers - few of whom actually live in Napa County - were at the Jackson Street yard deploying buses to the most critical locations in support of the Valley's firefighters and other first responders.

NVTA's emergency plan was invoked for the first time in the Agency's history. Its emergency plan contains

contacts and chain of communication as well as priorities for operating under extreme emergencies. It worked. The plan dictates how NVTA will communicate with the EOC, and how it will communicate with its other regional transportation agencies.

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NVTA was also in touch with Santa Rosa City Bus and Sonoma County Transit during the fires to offer assistance. At one point, NVTA was able to offer emergency fueling services thanks to Stan Teaderman of Allied Propane who was contacted during the firestorms and who notified his team to standby should Sonoma County Transit need to

fuel in Napa while transporting evacuees to Fairfield. Ultimately the fuel wasn't needed but it was reassuring to know that members of our community were ready to help.

Like the Valley's fire and police departments, the NVTA has mutual aid agreements with all other public transit systems in the San Francisco Bay Area. Soltrans, the Solano County System, and Alameda Contra Costa Transit were both on stand-by in the event NVTA was tasked to evacuate two of the County's large institutions, the Napa State Hospital and the Veterans Home of Yountville. NVTA was in contact regularly with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and a number of other transit systems reached out to NVTA to ensure that we had the resources we needed.



Vine Transit bus drivers, dispatchers and managers responded to the call for help with a well-organized plan to bring people to safety and to coordinate transfers between emergency shelters.

Over the week when the fires raged, buses were used for evacuations at Silverado Country Club, the Veteran's Home of Yountville, and the City of Calistoga. Buses were also held in standby at the Queen of the Valley Hospital and at Napa State Hospital.

People may not think of transit operators as first responders during times of disaster, but bus drivers, dispatchers, and managers left their own homes and families to report to work, traveled into restricted fire areas to reach evacuees and endured difficult working conditions, including long hours and unhealthy air.



Dispatch Supervisor Shelly Moe responded to work as her mobile home park in the hills east of Napa under mandatory evacuation orders because of the Atlas Peak Fire. In ensuing days, Shelly transported her fellow fire evacuees to emergency shelters. Shelly found refuge for herself with Cheryl Drake, Vine General Manager, who provided temporary housing for her employees.

We appreciate the commitment of our drivers and transit team from Transdev, the Vine contracted operator. NVTA received a number of thoughtful comments from residents of the Veterans Home for Transdev's work. Driver, Marcos Perdomo was singled out for his kindness and calmness during this chaotic event.



The NVTA Board of Directors honored its bus drivers, dispatchers, supervisors, and transit general manager on November 15 with a resolution noting their bravery and tenacity during the firestorms.

NVTA has never had to respond to this kind of disaster and we hope we never have to again. If we do, we know we have the level of commitment of our many transportation partners, and the appreciation and support from members of the community that was shown during this devastating event.

# What's Driving Ridership Trends?

Engaging Napa Valley residents about the benefits of public transit is a primary NVTA mission. The county's suburban and rural environment and competition with the automobile does not always make this an easy goal to accomplish.

Mirroring national trends, Vine Transit has experienced a downward movement in ridership. For all services combined, the Vine saw a 5.6% drop in total fixed route ridership between FY 2015-16 and FY 2016-17. Local fixed route service in Napa fell 8.5%.

Bucking the trend is Vine express bus services, which continues to experience strong demand. Most notably the Route 29 with service from Napa Valley to the Vallejo Ferry and El Cerrito BART Station, and Route 21 connecting the Soscol Gateway Transit Center and the Suisun/Fairfield Amtrak station continue to see robust ridership gains. Overall, the Vine Express Bus ridership increased by over 21% in 2017.

Declining ridership is part of a nationwide trend and is due to a number of factors:

- A strong economy and low unemployment results in greater car ownership and the financial flexibility to drive rather than using more cost-effective commute options.
- Relatively low gas prices also make driving in single occupancy vehicles more affordable.
- Competition for riders with Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft are frequently more convenient and are relatively more affordable than traditional car or taxi services.

NVTA is working on a number of ways to counter ridership trends and reduce congestion on Napa Valley's roadways.

## ENHANCING EXPRESS BUS

NVTA commissioned in 2017 a major study of the Vine Express Bus System to provide faster, more efficient transit

to key regional destinations on main travel corridors. Collectively, the improvements identified in the bus study are anticipated to generate ridership growth by making buses more competitive with automobiles and making it more convenient for users to access.

To understand commute behavior in Napa, NVTA used data from its groundbreaking 2014 Travel Behavior Study to understand commute patterns. Imported work trips – Napa's labor market commuting into Napa

- account for 25% of all auto trips in Napa. Exported work trips account for 16% of all auto trips in Napa County. Moreover, the Travel Behavior Study showed which "gateways" are being used to get in and out of Napa. Building an express bus system that emulates travel times and patterns will help reduce traffic on the most congested corridors.

The Vine Express Bus Corridor Study - approved by NVTA's Board of Directors in September – identifies a number of improvements to optimize and expand bus service to the Vallejo ferry, BART and the Amtrak station in Suisun City. Currently, Vine offers express service on two routes - Routes 21 and 29. The Vine also has two regional routes, the Route 10 and Route 11 that operate between Calistoga and the Vallejo Ferry.

The goal of the study is to make the Vine's commuter services more direct, faster, and more frequent.

Among the study's recommended improvements are more frequent and direct bus service on popular routes, such as expanding service on Route 29 south of the Redwood Park & Ride - the most heavily used portion of that route. Putting in more stops and stations along Highway 29 and removing low-ridership stops could reduce travel times and trip distances for express buses and ultimately reduce costs. Similarly, improving frequency and reducing stops on NVTA's regional routes is also planned. New limited stop service - Route 10x

*The goal of the study is to make the Vine's commuter services more direct, faster, and more frequent.*



and Route 11x will be introduced to reduce trip length, limit stops, increase frequency, and include more direct routes to high demand locations.

To make the Express Bus more convenient and faster than driving, bus only highway improvements along the SR 29 corridor are also planned. Bus-only queue lanes – a separate lane at key intersections that would allow buses to go to the front of the car line and get an early green light. Four Highway 29 intersections are being considered for queue lanes: at Highway 12/ Airport Boulevard, Napa Junction Road, Donaldson Way and American Canyon Road.

Adding more Park and Rides with upgraded amenities is another strategy for improving accessibility and the overall quality of service. Park and Ride access and building passenger stations on highway ramps will allow express bus service to stay on the corridor and limit deviations, which will significantly reduce running times.

**CAPITALIZING ON OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

NVTA is also conducting a wide-ranging review of the Vine transit system to explore ways of attracting more riders, improve operations and performance, and consider how technology can improve mobility for residents.

The Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) focuses primarily on local bus routes serving the City of Napa (Routes 1-8). The COA will integrate findings from the Express Bus Study, and will evaluate specifically coordination with Vine Regional Routes 10 and 11. The COA will complement improvements already identified for regional routes in the Vine Express Bus Corridor Study

The COA looks at local demographics and concentration of populations with a propensity for riding transit and builds a market profile for the current and untapped demand for transit in Napa County. The study also creates a baseline from which service can be added or removed based on recommendations from public outreach and NVTA planning staff.

The document facilitates route review at a granular level using a number of key performance indicators. NVTA staff will use this information to better understand where service is being underutilized or where service might be increased to address unserved demand.

The COA recommendations will result in a menu of potential service changes that are heavily focused on projected transit demand rather than focusing solely

on service coverage. NVTA will also look at serving areas with low transit demand using new technologies that can reduce costs and provide comparable or better service. This new approach to addressing mobility is called “microtransit.”

The COA was launched in 2017 and will wrap up in late spring of 2018 when proposed service changes/ restructuring will be considered by the NVTA board.

**SCHEDULING SOFTWARE**

New scheduling software was acquired to aid staff in creating more accurate and efficient schedules. It also allows schedules to be released in timeframes that align with the ebbs and flows of congestion experienced in Napa County. The software can also reduce the number of vehicles in the system and reduce costs accordingly.

**USING NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO IMPROVE MOBILITY**



NVTA continues to implement and explore innovative technologies to improve transit service.

NVTA rolled out *Ride the Vine*, a ride-hailing application for on-demand shuttle transportation in American Canyon, Yountville, St. Helena and Calistoga. Residents and visitors use the free app to request a ride and track the status of the shuttle. A “honk” push notification alerts riders when the shuttle arrives. It’s like other ride sharing apps, only more affordable, with more leg room, and a professional driver at the wheel.

The *Ride the Vine* app is a real game-changer for getting around the Napa Valley communities where Vine shuttles operate. Using their smartphones riders can schedule rides by putting in their origin and destination. This prompts the system to deploy a local shuttle to the pick-up location. Rides can still be hailed by phone or also accessing the web on a desktop computer. Preliminary data reveals *Ride the Vine* has gained significant popularity among shuttle users.

Rides (12/1/17 - 2/14/18)		
CITY	RIDES	DOWNLOADS
Calistoga	2,077	1,200
Yountville	1,965	850
American Canyon	1,464	850
St. Helena Shuttle	1,018	550
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,524</b>	<b>3,450</b>

This innovation is relatively new and NVTA is currently the only transit operator using this technology for door-to-door service in the Bay Area. The *Ride the Vine* application has already received the Women's Transportation Seminar Innovative Project of the Year Award, from the San Francisco Chapter.

### NEW ZERO EMISSION BUSES

NVTA was awarded a \$1.1 million federal grant to purchase the Vine's first all-electric buses, a significant milestone in ongoing efforts to encourage public transit use and reduce fossil fuel emissions. The buses will replace diesel and gasoline-powered vehicles.



The grant will be used to build the new electric infrastructure necessary to operate the vehicles. The buses can run a full day on a single charge. The total cost is estimated at \$3.82 million, which includes purchasing the vehicles, accessories and charging stations.

Five buses will be ordered in 2018 and be put into service in 2020 in Yountville, Calistoga, and St. Helena and on local service in Napa.

### EXPANDING COMMUTE OPTIONS

NVTA is working with the Solano Transportation Authority on re-energizing a ride-share program the two agencies co-manage.

The Solano Napa Commuter Information program (SNCI) is being re-branded as "V-Commute" for a better identification of the program's mission.

Since 1979, the effort has promoted rideshare through the Vanpool Incentive Program, which subsidizes vehicle acquisition and operations, rideshare information (including ride match services), employer outreach, the Emergency Ride Home Program and Bucks for Bikes.

Strategies for increasing participation in the program include adding more employers to the rideshare database annually, providing consultations to support and encourage the use of commute alternatives, scheduling and attending more community events and promoting Emergency Ride Home and Bike Incentive programs to encourage the use of commute alternatives.

# Future Vine Maintenance Facility



NVTA's Board of Directors took a major step toward construction of a new bus maintenance facility by certifying the project's Environmental Impact Report. The existing Jackson Street yard is outdated and too small to accommodate the Vine's growing fleet.

The Vine Transit Bus Maintenance Facility will be built on an 8-acre property on Sheehy Court in south Napa County, northeast of the Napa County Airport. The facility features six service bays, a stand-alone administration building with a regional conference center, a modern bus wash, solar panels, and parking for transit vehicles, employees and visitors.

The 28,000-square-foot facility takes advantage of the latest green-building designs, including a zero-net photovoltaic system and environmentally sustainable materials using LEED principles.

The project is currently in design with about 40% of the design completed. The project will go out to bid in late 2018. Construction is slated to start by Spring 2019 and open in Fall 2020.



# Preserving Napa's Precious Open Space

One day in the near future Suscol Headwaters Preserve in south Napa County could beckon visitors with miles of recreational trails and gorgeous mountaintop views.

NVTA is playing a role to make that dream happen. The agency received \$1.125 million in One Bay Area Grant Priority Conservation Area (PCA) funds from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission which was committed to Phase 1 of the Suscol Headwaters Preserve Project – an effort of the Napa County Regional Park & Open Space District.

The PCA funds are preserved for roads on the federal aid system and can't be used for acquiring anything but the actual trail portion of the Open Space District's project, but MTC recognized two critical needs in the North Bay – preservation of open space and improving throughputs for farm to market. While this required employing some creativity – our partnerships made it simple.

Working with county staff, NVTA identified an easy solution to meet the federal requirements and honor MTC's policies. NVTA programmed the \$1.125 million to the County of Napa's Silverado Trail Repaving Project which rehabilitated Silverado Trail from Calistoga City limits to Larkmead Lane. The PCA revenues directed to the trail freed up funds that the county had set aside for that project to acquire the Phase I Suscol Headwaters Preserve parcel.

NVTA staff was also able to help the Open Space District acquire Phase 2 of the Suscol Headwaters Preserve project.

NVTA is a partner with Caltrans and the Solano Transportation Authority on the Jameson Canyon widening. The Jameson Canyon Widening National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) document required that project to acquire 167 acres to mitigate for the loss of habitat for the red legged frog – listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. The lag in the project completion and the precipitous increase in property values resulted in not having sufficient funding to meet this requirement.

NVTA worked with Caltrans and the Open Space District to close out the environmental phase on Jameson Canyon (SR 12) by using the roughly \$2.1 million set aside for Jameson Canyon red legged frog mitigation to match other funds that the Open Space District had to acquire Phase 2 of the Suscol Headwaters Preserve project. This not only helped identify critically needed funding to acquire Phase 2 of the Open Space project but it also minimized the costs to both the Napa and Solano Counties.

Without these actions, an additional \$1-2 million in new funds, primarily from Napa and Solano State Transportation Improvement Programs, would have been needed to meet the shortfall for funding the mitigation.



## Vine Transit Stats

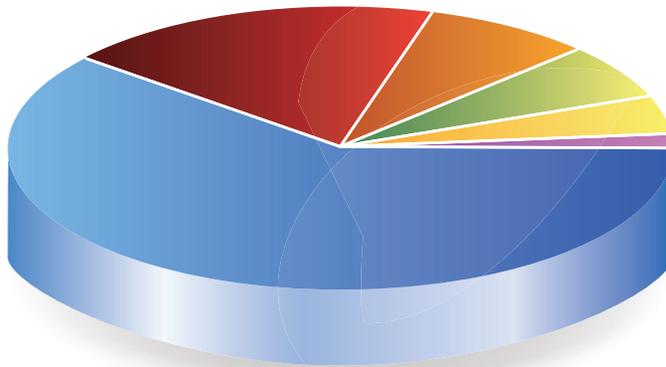
System Ridership		
Transit Service	2016 Ridership	2017 Ridership
Vine Local	1,013,818	927,648
Vine Express	99,215	120,119
Vine Go paratransit	22,690	23,603
American Canyon Transit	24,576	20,677
Yountville Trolley	22,251	21,432
St. Helena Shuttle	11,406	14,528
Calistoga Shuttle	21,731	20,035
<b>Total Passengers</b>	<b>1,215,687</b>	<b>1,148,042</b>

# 2017 Financials

NVTA's financial management practices ensure the Authority's financial condition is healthy and stable. NVTA will continue to keep a watchful eye on expenditures and remain committed to sound management practices to deliver the highest quality and cost-effective services to county residents.

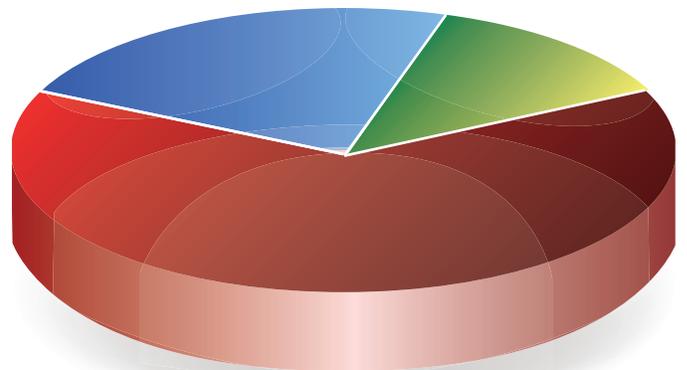
For a copy of NVTA's Audited Financial Statements for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017 along with the Single Audit, visit NVTA's website: [nvta.ca.gov](http://nvta.ca.gov)

## REVENUES



- TDA/LTF 64%
- Federal Grants 23%
- Fares 6%
- State Grants 4%
- Regional Measure 2 2%
- Other Grants & Local Support 1%

## EXPENDITURES



- Transit 57%
- CMA 27%
- Capital Purchases 16%

### REVENUES

#### Operating

##### Congestion Management Authority

TDA/ Local Transportation Fund	\$ 3,830,791
Federal Highway Administration	1,117,704
State & Other Grants/Revenues	139,232
Local Support	120,000

##### Transit Services

TDA/ Local Transportation Funds	\$ 5,044,865
Federal Grants	3,044,818
Fares	1,247,968
State Transit Assistance	675,527
Regional Measure 2	446,400
Other Grants & Revenues	15,311

#### Capital

TDA/ Local Transportation Funds	\$ 3,465,415
Federal Grants	210,000
Other Grants	7,843

**Total Revenues \$ 19,365,874**

### EXPENDITURES

#### Operating

##### Congestion Management Authority

Debt Service	\$ 2,541,350
Professional Services	1,722,625
Salaries and Benefits	1,629,904
Agency Administration	475,538

##### Transit Services

Purchase Transportation	\$ 8,929,934
Depreciation Expense	2,659,934
Fuel	921,003
Insurance	299,299
Services and Supplies	170,042
Personel Costs	158,310
Marketing	103,077
Maintenance	83,394

#### Capital Purchases

Real Estate	\$ 2,609,873
Equipment	712,924
Vehicles	360,461

**Total Expenditures \$ 15,976,227**



NAPA VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
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NVRTA.CA.GOV | RIDETHEVINE.COM

NVRTA serves as the countywide transportation planning agency for the incorporated and unincorporated areas within Napa County and is responsible for programming State and Federal funding for transportation projects within the County. NVTA is responsible for coordinating short and long term planning and funding within an intermodal policy framework including highways, streets and roads, transit and paratransit, bicycle and pedestrian network improvements. NVTA also provides fixed route and on demand transit services in Napa County including Vine Transit in Napa, American Canyon Transit, Calistoga Shuttle, Yountville Trolley, St. Helena Shuttle, and Vine Go paratransit services.



**NVRTA**  
NAPA VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY